

Byron L. Dorgan

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**He says he'll offer legislation that would give
Justice Department a role in deciding future railroad mergers:**

DORGAN CALLS FOR RAILROAD MERGER MORATORIUM

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) — U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND), called Tuesday for the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to block the proposed merger between the Burlington-Northern Railroad and the Canadian National Railroad. He asked the STB to go further and impose a rail merger moratorium while it evaluates the impact on consumers and shippers from the increasing concentration of the rail industry which is already one of the most concentrated industries in the nation.

Dorgan's call came in testimony during a Surface Transportation Board hearing to consider the proposed Burlington Northern Railroad - Canadian National Railroad merger. Approving the proposal will only prompt more mergers within the industry, Dorgan warned, which will "only lead to more trouble for captive shippers" who already pay higher prices because of the lack of competition within the railroad industry.

"From all the evidence that exists, this merger -- if approved -- will lead to other mergers," Dorgan said. "The last thing, in my judgment, we need in the rail industry in this country is more concentration. What we need is more competition, not more concentration."

He asked the STB to "be bold and take a look at this in the context of what it leads to, and if it leads to more concentration, whether that will benefit this country. I, frankly, don't think it will."

"It's important for us to evaluate whether we want additional concentration in this industry, or do we think further concentration is unhealthy for our system and our shippers around the country," Dorgan said.

Dorgan said he is also drafting legislation that would give the Justice Department's Anti-Trust Division authority to pass judgment on proposed mergers in the rail industry, in addition to the STB. "I think it was a mistake not to include Justice and my legislation will do so."

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